

Toronto Torah

Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Emor

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This issue of Toronto Torah is dedicated by Paul and Chavi Jacobs to commemorate the yearzeit on Lag ba'Omer of Paul's father, Harold M. Jacobs, Tzvi Meyer ben Yechiel z"l

This issue of Toronto Torah is dedicated by Paul & Annie Samuel and Moishe & Nicole Posner to commemorate the third yearzeit of Annie & Nicole's mother, Lisa Ouanounou, Iza bat David & Miriam z"l, whose yearzeit is 21 Iyar

The Two Educators

Rabbi Yehuda Mann

This week's parshah opens with the law prohibiting Kohanim from contracting *tumah*. Not only does each Kohen have to be careful, but there is also a special commandment to the parents of Kohanim under the age of Bar mitzvah to take responsibility to warn and teach their children not to contract *tumah*.

Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin (*Oznayim l'Torah* to Parshat Emor) asks the following question: since parents are obligated in the mitzvah of chinuch, to educate their children to observe **every** mitzvah, why does the Torah warn the parents in particular to educate their children about this mitzvah of *tumah* more than any other mitzvah? We don't see a special commandment to parents to make sure that their children keep Shabbat or eat kosher, so what makes this mitzvah of *tumah* so special that there is an extra commandment?

Rabbi Sorotzkin explains that each person has two main educators: his parents and teachers on the one hand, and his friends and surrounding society on the other. Usually, both groups of educators correspond with each other. When a father tells his Jewish child to eat kosher food, and then the child goes out in the street and he sees other Jewish children who have been similarly instructed by their parents to eat kosher food, the society supports the values that he hears from his parents. When a father educates his child

to keep Shabbat and the child sees his friends who were similarly instructed and they too observe Shabbat, it supports what he heard at home.

However, the mitzvah of *tumah* is different because the father who is a Kohen tells his son, also a Kohen, that he doesn't want him to come in contact with *tumah*, and the child goes out to the street and he sees other Jewish children who are not taking any notice of this, and he doesn't understand that they don't take notice because they're not children of Kohanim. So in the case of *tumah* the society is opposing the ideas and values that the father is trying to bequeath. Therefore in that particular case, the Torah says that there is a special case of chinuch; that one can't only teach their child this like other mitzvot, since it will be dismissed after one conversation with his friends. The father has to say it, and repeat it, and redouble his efforts at home in order to educate his children to that matter.

Interestingly, Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky (*Emet l'Yaakov*, Parshat Emor) notes a comment only a few verses later, reminding these two influences: the street and the home. The Torah says that if the daughter of a Kohen acts in a certain inappropriate manner, she defiles her father. (Vayikra 21:9) Rav Yaakov asks why the Torah is so harsh only with the daughter who misbehaves, when we don't see any mention in the Torah of a son who misbehaves and

"defiles" his father? Rav Yaakov explains that in early times, girls were educated exclusively at home, and remained primarily in that environment. If the daughter misbehaved, it was therefore attributed to the education she received at home from her parents. With the daughter's misbehavior we know that the parents failed as educators, and the daughter defiles her family name. However, the son had the added influences of school and community. In the case of the son's misbehavior we can't know that he turned out like that because of the failure of his parents as educators, because it could very well be that they were outstanding people, and excellent educators, but others had a negative influence on their son. Therefore, In that case, the father's name isn't defiled.

May we as parents succeed at home with the education of what we hold to be most precious, our children. May we make sure that they always are surrounded by the best Jewish environment possible, an environment that will support the values we teach at home.

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OUR BEIT MIDRASH

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SGAN ROSH BEIT MIDRASH	RABBI JARED ANSTANDIG, RABBI YEHUDA MANN
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Summary

Chapter 44 of Yeshayahu is well-known for three elements:

- 1) 44:6 is one of the ten verses of Malchuyot (Monarchy) in the Rosh HaShanah musaf amidah.
- 2) Most of the chapter (44:1-23) is included in the haftarah for Parshat Vayikra. [However, the connection to Parshat Vayikra is primarily from the end of Chapter 43, as seen in last week's column.]
- 3) In the end of the chapter (44:24-28), Hashem says that He will instruct the future Persian King Cyrus to do His bidding, and so Jerusalem will be rebuilt and the Beit haMikdash re-established after the Babylonian exile.

The chapter begins with a promise from Hashem to rejuvenate the Jewish people. Just as Hashem sends rain to bring life to dry earth, so Hashem will send prophecy and inspiration to bring the nation back to life; we will thrive like willows growing beside streams of water. (44:1-5)

Yeshayahu identifies one of the central ways in which idols fail to match up to the Divine: Hashem predicts the future, and it comes to pass. Yeshayahu then builds on this point, describing at

length how human artisans invest their strength and energy in forming statues from metal and wood, even as they use pieces of the same material for their own needs. They burn it in a fire, they roast meat with it and warm themselves, and then they bow to the rest. How could they not recognize that the shepherd to which they bow is ash? (44:6-20)

The prophet then turns to the Jews and reiterates a promise he has made frequently in this book: Hashem will forgive their sins, and bring them back to their land. Therefore, the Jews should sing and rejoice, as should the land and the heavens. (44:21-23)

Finally, Hashem demonstrates His unique knowledge of the future and power over nature. Hashem says: I am the One who will tell the depths [Babylon, per Rashi] to dry up; I am the One who will set Cyrus as shepherd over Israel, fulfilling My will. And so Jerusalem will be rebuilt and the Sanctuary will be re-established.

Insight

Academics have long been troubled by the way that our chapter identifies Cyrus by name and positions him as our royal redeemer. Yeshayahu lived

before the Persians became a power, or the Jews were expelled to Babylon! Even as a prophet, how could Yeshayahu have told the Jews of his day about Cyrus and our return at this point? What would the message have meant to them?

This has led academics to split the book of Yeshayahu into multiple parts, such as by dividing it between Chapters 1-39 and 40-66. The theory is that the later chapters of the book were written later in Jewish history; this is supported by textual elements like the absence of Yeshayahu's name and life story after Chapter 39. However, it is worth noting that the Dead Sea Scrolls have the complete Book of Yeshayahu, and no one has ever found any fragment scrolls containing just Chapters 1-39 or 40-66. Further, there is much that unites the book as a whole, from beginning to end.

With a different approach, Amos Chacham, in the Daat Mikra edition of Yeshayahu (pg. 497), pointed out that Yeshayahu makes references to students he teaches, as well as to having them seal up prophecies for a later generation. He suggested that the Cyrus prophecies may be what Yeshayahu wanted sealed and held until later.

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Siddur Insights: Creating Our Own Songs of Praise

Rabbi Jonathan Ziring

The heart of *pesukei d'zimra* is Ashrei, followed by the next five chapters of Tehillim. [Together, these are the final six chapters of Tehillim.] The fourth of these chapters, however, establishes a principle about prayer in general that can help frame our perspective.

The chapter opens as follows: "Hallelukah. Sing to Hashem a new song, and His praise in the assembly of the pious." (Tehillim 149:1, alhatorah.org)

Seforno relegates this instruction to **the Messianic period**. The call for a new song, he attributes to the radical new world promised in Yeshayahu, which, as the verses assert, will elicit joy: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." (Yeshayahu 65:17, alhatorah.org)

Most commentators do not offer such a limitation. Rather, they note that the previous chapter ended discussing the praise of the "pious ones", identified as the Jewish people. "And He has lifted up a horn for His people, a praise for all His pious, even for the children of Israel, a people near to Him. Hallelukah." (Tehillim 148:14, alhatorah.org) The specific application to the Jewish people is implied by the second verse of this chapter as well: "Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." (Tehillim 149:2, alhatorah.org) Thus, this chapter calls on **Jews, in every era**, to sing a new song.

Radak explains the rationale for this: "These written songs should not be sufficient for you. Rather, you should create for Him songs [about] the wonders that He has done for you."

The purpose of *pesukei d'zimra* is to prepare the person praying for the *amidah*. Often, the spiritual elation that should come from these psalms (and other sections) is lost due to lack of understanding or the numbing effects of daily repetition. This chapter, by calling on each person to develop his or her own song in response to personal salvation, reminds us that the structure of prayer as we have it is meant to be the floor, not the ceiling. In fact, the importance of the influence on a person's intent has led many authorities to rule that it is better to say less with intent than more without. [See Rabbi Eliezer Melamed, *Peninei Halakha*, Hilchot Tefillat Nashim 22:7 concerning women, and n. 2 *ibid* for Rabbi Nachum Rabinovitch's more general ruling.]

The opening verses of our chapter, however, offer another solution – adding prayers that capture our personal experiences. In principle, such additions can be verbal, though the precise question of where one can add prayers is beyond the scope of this article. Alternatively, one could take care to use the existing words of the prayers to reflect on one's personal experiences, infusing them with new meaning, which captures the spirit, if not the letter, of this psalm's call.

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Biography

Rabbi Ephraim Greenblatt

Rabbi Ezra Goldschmiedt

Rabbi Ephraim Greenblatt was born in Jerusalem c. 1930. He displayed potential to become a Torah giant at a young age, learning in the Mirrer Yeshiva and then Yeshivat HaDarom under the likes of Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz, Rabbi Eliezer Man Schach and Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer. However, his time in Israel was cut short at the young age of eighteen, due to the financial needs of his parents and nine younger siblings. He journeyed to America to earn a salary with which to support them.

Hardly speaking a word of English, he lived with his grandfather, himself a respected rabbi, in New York's Lower East Side. There, he found a modest position in the rabbinate while also learning under Rabbi Moshe Feinstein. Rabbi Feinstein took Rabbi Greenblatt under his wing like his own son, and eventually approached him with the charge to strengthen the Jewish community in Memphis, Tennessee. Rabbi Greenblatt went there and found himself overwhelmed – the large Jewish community had all of two *shomer shabbat* Jews. Returning to New York dejected, Rabbi Greenblatt told Rabbi Feinstein that Memphis was “an *ir hanidachat*” beyond his ability to develop, to which Rabbi Feinstein responded that he knew exactly what he was getting Rabbi Greenblatt into. This was a place starving for Torah and growth.

With words of encouragement from his mentor, Rabbi Greenblatt returned to Memphis, where he served as Rabbi for 58 years. During that time, he helped turn Memphis into a thriving Jewish community; he was responsible for the religious revival of thousands of now-observant Jews. Continuing his growth in learning, Rabbi Greenblatt went on to become one of North America's greatest talmidei chachamim. A visitor to Memphis once asked Rabbi Greenblatt the million-dollar question: “You could have been a gadol in Bnei Brak, why are you here in Memphis?” Rabbi Greenblatt responded, “Memphis produces gedolim!”

The author of the 7-volume response *Rivivot Ephraim*, Rabbi Greenblatt returned to Israel in 2009, and he continued teaching there. Rabbi Greenblatt passed away on the 2nd of Shevat, 5774.

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Weekly Halachah

Meat Spoon, Dairy Coffee, Now What?

Rabbi Adam Friedmann

You use a metal spoon to stir a pot of chicken soup on the stove. A few hours later, you accidentally grab the spoon and use it to stir milk into a cup of coffee. What are the statuses of the spoon, coffee, and mug?

In general, we assume that metal utensils immersed in hot liquids both absorb flavour from the liquid and emit previously absorbed flavour into the liquid. In terms of mixtures of meat and dairy, this presents two concerns. One is within the spoon itself, where flavour absorbed from the coffee can combine with flavour from the soup and create a prohibited mixture. The second concern is in the surrounding environment, where flavours emitted from the spoon may create a forbidden mixture. The Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 94:1,4) rules that if a spoon used with meat is stirred into a pot of hot dairy liquid, the spoon, dairy liquid, and pot are all rendered prohibited. This is unless there is 60 times the volume of the spoon in the liquid, which in the case of our coffee cup, there isn't.

However, we may ask what exactly counts as “hot” liquid with regards to imparting and extracting flavour? The Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 105:2) rules that fundamentally only the vessel within which a liquid is cooked on the fire (or other heat source) gets hot enough to cause flavour transfer. If the liquid is poured into a secondary vessel, there is a dispute about whether it's still considered hot enough. Ideally, we are careful for the stringent view that some flavour transfer still occurs in a secondary vessel. *Bedieved* (“after the fact”), however, we are lenient. Rabbi Akiva Eiger (comment to Yoreh Deah 105:2) adds a caveat to this. He explains that *bedieved* includes a case in which being stringent would ruin the food or utensil in question.

In our case, the coffee cup is a secondary vessel. Therefore, even though the spoon should not have been used for coffee, there is no concern after the fact. According to Rabbi Akiva Eiger, the spoon itself is not in a *bedieved* state since it could still be kashered. The coffee and the mug could not.

Therefore, in this case, the coffee and the mug are unaffected, and the spoon must be kashered before further use.

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Sefer haChinuch, Mitzvah 25:

Belief in G-d, Part 1

By Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

According to the Sefer haChinuch, the Torah's 25th mitzvah is the command which begins the Aseret haDibrot (Ten Commandments), “I am G-d, your Lord, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves.”

The Sefer haChinuch followed the 12th century view of Rambam (*Sefer haMitzvot*, Aseh 1) that this mitzvah includes belief in a single G-d who created all that exists, by whose Will all exists, and who is eternal. The mitzvah is also to believe that this same G-d brought us out of Egypt and gave us the Torah. This is the foundation of Jewish belief and practice; the fact that there is an omnipotent G-d, who is involved with our world, is what establishes the validity of the rest of Torah. Ramban wrote similarly. (*Hasagot* to Aseh 1 and Lo Taaseh 5)

In contrast, the author of Halachot Gedolot (*Bahag*, cited in Ramban's *Hasagot* to Aseh 1) argued in the 8th century that this Divine declaration sets the stage for all other mitzvot, but is not a mitzvah unto itself. He cited a midrash (Mechilta d'R' Yishmael, Yitro: BaChodesh 6) which indicates that before there can be a mitzvah, there must be a pre-mitzvah general acceptance of G-d: “This may be compared to a king who entered a land. His servants said, ‘Issue decrees upon them!’ He replied, ‘No; when they accept my reign, I will issue decrees upon them. If they do not accept my reign, how will they fulfill my decrees?’ So G-d declared to Israel, ‘I am G-d, your Lord. You shall not have the gods of others before Me. I am the One whose reign you accepted in Egypt.’ They replied, ‘Yes.’ Then just as you accepted My reign, so You shall accept My decrees: You shall not have, etc.”

To be continued...

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Shabbat May 5-6

After hashkamah R' Yehuda Mann, Halachah from the Parshah, Clanton Park

6:45 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, The Problem of the Baal Mum, Hebrew Shiur, BAYT

30 min pre-minchah R' Steven Gotlib, Big Topics, Village Shul

After minchah R' Mordechai Torczyner, Gemara Ketuvot, BAYT (Milevsky Bais Medrash) (men)

After minchah, Idan Rakovsky, Halachah in the Parshah, Shaarei Tefillah

Sun. May 7

9:00 AM R' Zev Spitz & R' Yehuda Mann, Semichat Chaver, Clanton Park (men): New Zman—Hilchot Seudah!

Mon. May 8

2:00 PM Idan Rakovsky, Megillat Ruth, ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/idanrak>

8:00 PM Prielle & Idan Rakovsky, Song of the Week, ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklysng> New Season!

8:30 PM R' Yehuda Mann, Non-Jewish Help in Halachah, Shomrai Shabbos (men)

Tues. May 9 Lag ba'Omer

8:00 AM R' Steven Gotlib, Sefer Emunah uBitachon, Village Shul

9:00 AM Idan Rakovsky, Tzidkat haTzaddik, Yeshivat Or Chaim (university men)

1:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Wisdom of King Solomon: Kohelet, ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklymt>

5:00 PM R' M Torczyner, The Lag ba'Omer of S. Y. Agnon, Grandparents/Granddaughters at Ulpanat Orot

7:00 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Shemuel (Chap. 19), ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklymt> (men)

8:30 PM R' Jared Anstandig, Adventures Through Shas, Shaarei Shomayim (university women)

8:30 PM R' Yehuda Mann, Contemporary Halachah, Clanton Park (women)

Wed. May 10

9:00 AM R' Jared Anstandig, Halachic Philosophy of the Rav, Or Chaim (university men)

10 AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Jewish Migrations: Origins of Ashkenazim and Sephardim, Week 2 of 4
On ZOOM @ <http://tiny.cc/weeklymt> Register @ <https://torontotorah.com/wednesdays>, there is a fee

12:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Business Ethics #2 of 3: The Ethics of Non-Disclosure Agreements
With Continuing Education credit for Accountants, on ZOOM at <http://tiny.cc/bmlunch>
Registration at <https://torontotorah.com/business>

8:00 PM R' Steven Gotlib, Ashkenazi and Sephardi Differences, The Village Shul

8:00 PM Idan Rakovsky, Megillat Ruth, Shaarei Tefillah

8:15 PM R' Yehuda Mann, Contemporary Halachah, Clanton Park

Thurs. May 11

8:00 AM R' Steven Gotlib, Jewish Mysticism, Village Shul

1:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Shemuel (Chap. 31), ZOOM: <http://tiny.cc/weeklymt> (women)

8:00 PM R' Yehuda Mann, Beitzah (advanced), for location: ymann@torontotorah.com

8:30 PM Idan Rakovsky, Sefer haChinuch, Shaarei Tefillah Beit Midrash Night (men)

Fri. May 12

9:00 AM R' Jared Anstandig, Parshah, Yeshivat Or Chaim (university)

10:30 AM R' Jared Anstandig, R' Mordechai Torczyner, R' Yehuda Mann, Ketuvot Perek 1 *advanced*
In-person at Yeshivat Or Chaim, on ZOOM at <http://tiny.cc/frishiur>

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